

RT Volume 42, No. 1 Spring 2020

Editorial

Steve Sauvé 3

Cartoons

Dave Fletcher 38

1:87 FDNY Fireboat “Fire Fighter”

Barry Maddin..... 4

1:48 CF-188A 2017 Demo Team Hornet

Gerry Doyle 15

1:72 German Navy Br.1150 Atlantic 1

Bernie Hengst 22

1:25 “Space Odyssey”, AMT’s classic Ford van

Massimo Santarossa 27

1:48 Captured Bf 109B

Brian Latour 33

Cover Comment: *Putting the ‘I’ in IPMS, an IPMS Ireland member brought this model to the IPMS (UK) National convention at Telford in 2017 where it was spotted by IPMS Canada members. Gerry Doyle of Dublin built this extremely eye-catching model of the CF-18 Hornet 2017 CAF airshow demonstration scheme. See page 15 for the full build article.*

Page 3

Editorial

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A new decade and a new look

Hopefully you’ve noticed a few changes to this, the first **RT** of 2020. I decided to see if I could buff up the look because I realized that the **RT** cover design hadn’t changed much since I took over the editorial reins again in 2009 and I wanted to see what I could come up with. I kicked around some ideas and then received valuable feedback from **Bob Migliardi** and **Daryl Dean**. After a few rounds going back and forth I finally settled on what you see now.

Because we’re reaching over 95% of the membership with our emailed newsletter **beaveRTales** (**BT**) we’re moving the National Director and the Chapter and Member Liaison columns over to **BT**, freeing up another page for **RT** articles. The back cover also got a make-over, again moving some of the material over to **BT** and making room for periodic information and internal marketing as needed.

BONUS!

In consultation with our esteemed Treasurer, **John MacDonald**, it was decided that we could add some bonus pages to some **RTs** this year. This allows me to include a bit more content in an issue, and/or to enlarge some of the article content and/or to improve its look on the page.

The cupboard, or the tank barn, is bare...

The astute reader will notice that this issue is devoid of armour or military vehicle content. I have mentioned this impending shortage here and in our other media outlets but these requests (or begging or pleas, if you will) haven’t resulted in a substantial response that produced enough new articles to keep feeding the **RT** machine. I took a look back

over the past issues where I've been editor during my current tenure. I realized that this is now the tenth issue, out of the 44 published since 2009 that didn't have a military vehicle or equipment article in it. Not a good statistic, especially when I'm striving to provide a good balance of material to the membership in each issue. I really need your help on this, folks. I'm not suggesting that you don't submit your articles, whatever the subject. But those of you who gravitate towards army vehicle or equipment, please get in touch with me. Ultimately **RT** publishes what we have available, period.

An embarrassment of riches...

Just before writing this editorial it was announced that yet another new-mould 1:48 Spitfire Mk. I kit would be forthcoming from the Eduard stable for a roll-out the IPMS/USA National Convention this summer. I still have an old Tamiya kit from 1993, an ill-advised purchase of a new (and poor) Airfix kit in 2007, which was self-surpassed by Airfix's 2010 release, which was completely outclassed by Tamiya's 2018 offering. That's just the Spitfire Mk. I, and it's hard to imagine how much Eduard will have to do to move the ball even further along. But no doubt I'll still buy one at the Nats this July. And maybe even build one someday.

But on the other hand...

I suppose that this segues into the online community wailing about the injustice of "yet another Spitfire/Mustang/Bf 109/Sherman/Panther being released when so many other subjects are being ignored." An old saying I like is that, "being a critic is an easy job; it just doesn't pay very well." Despite the self-righteous naïveté being expressed online, the reality is that model companies are businesses and are normally hesitant to chase risky rewards when there's easier money to be made elsewhere. They'd prefer to have a 10% slice of the Spitfire/Mustang/Bf 109/Sherman/Panther pie over 100% of the 1:32 Sunderland market. Think of it like heading to the track to bet on the ponies - is your money on the long shots or do you drift toward the more-sure things? I'd wager that most ultra-daring model companies would probably now be found on the *Out of Business* appendix of the Plastic Model Companies Wiki page.

Moving on...

I hope you enjoy the new format and the extra pages. Let me put a final idea out there for you - if you like an **RT** article, send me a quick note and I'll be happy to pass it on to the author. Paper magazines don't get the same online love and feedback from the readers, so please give these fine folks a moment of your time. They're keeping this magazine alive and I'm sure they'd love to hear from you.

Page 4

FDNY Fireboat "Fire Fighter"

Barry Maddin
IPMS Canada C#6000
Truro, Nova Scotia

The FDNY Fireboat "Fire Fighter"

The fireboat "Fire Fighter", built in 1938 by United Shipyards of Staten Island, New York, was named to honour all the firemen of the FDNY (Fire Department of the City of New York) who were killed in the line of duty, rather than naming it after a NYC mayor, as was the tradition with previous boats.

The Fire Fighter would remain the most powerful fireboat in the world for decades. It was the first diesel-electric fireboat delivered and was equipped with eight deck monitors and a 55-foot water tower.

When new, Fire Fighter had a colour scheme comprising:

- a black hull and water tower,
- a white band along the top of the hull,
- a white deckhouse and pilothouse,
- a buff colour smokestack, with a black band at the top with the fittings,
- hose nozzles and manifolds in polished brass.

The aft water tower was removed in 1962 and by 1988 the Fire Fighter was painted fire engine red from the waterline up, with same white band at the top of the hull. The deck and monitor platform was also painted fire engine red as are the nozzles, stack and radar mast.

Fire Fighter was built with a pair of Winton sixteen-cylinder diesel engines, with each tied to an electric generator capable of powering her twin 1,000 horsepower electric motors. Once at the fire scene the boat's engineers needed to divide power between the screws and the fire pumps. When 100% of the power is sent to the pumps she was capable of delivering 20,000 gallons of water per minute to either of her fire monitors, or ashore to trucks fighting more traditional fires. The Fire Fighter remained in active service for 74 years, from 1938 to 2012. The Fire Fighter's last action was responding to the 9/11 disaster, providing water with her powerful pumps to land-based fire trucks when the fire mains around the twin towers failed.

The Kit

Unlike the original 1963 Revell kit that came with plated brass-coloured fittings the 1992 reissue (**Fig. 1**) is produced in white and black plastic. Note that the resissued kit's name on the box is incorrectly written as "Firefighter" whereas the fireboat's name has always been "Fire Fighter."

The kit is in 1:87 (or HO) scale and the sprues show their age, with heavy mould lines and a number of sinkholes visible. (**Fig. 2**) The kit's 19-page instruction booklet breaks everything down into sub-assemblies. The instruction names each item and indicates the colour it should be painted and clearly indicates its location. I planned to leave off the radar mast and paint the Fire Fighter as she appeared around the mid-1950's. The hull comes in two halves with a main deck, wheelhouse deck and a monitor deck. As a small bonus the kit provides five Fire Fighter figures although in real life there would be many more Fire Fighters to man the boat.

The Fireboat

Following the directions I glued the two hull halves together. The fit was not the greatest, but using clamps and some filler the hull looked good when done.

I planned to mount the kit in a scenic diorama setting so I left off the mounting stand, propeller assemblies and rudders. I then started looking at ways to improve the appearance of the kit, starting with the barrows. A barrow is a large cylinder mounted in a frame that rotates on a track on the deck and allows the barrow to turn in the frame. The barrow is used to hold reels of fire hose, enabling the Fire Fighter to pump water to shore installations or fire pumper trucks. The barrows had moulded-on grab handles which I shaved off and then drilled out where the ends were and inserted brass wire (**Fig. 3**). I assembled the barrows and frames and set them aside.

I installed the main deck, which took a bit of clamping on the hull sides to ensure a tight fit. Some filler was needed for small gaps at the bow and stern. I then installed the storage boxes, gunwale steps, cleats on the main deck and the rope bumper on the bow.

At this point I decided to paint the hull assembly and primed it with Krylon Flat White. Using Tamiya XF-2 Flat White I painted the white stripe around the hull. I carefully masked the stripe and painted the remainder of the hull with Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black (**Fig. 4**).

I put together the main deck front and rear cabins and the wheelhouse cabin. I shaved off the moulded-on hatch levers on the cabins and substituted them with 26-gauge wire.

I then painted the cabins using the same method that I had used to paint the white stripe on the hull. Then, after masking the cabins I painted the bottom stripe on the main deck cabins and the bulkhead vents with Vallejo 950 Black and the interior of the cabins Vallejo 870 Medium Sea Grey.

The instructions have you installing all the decks and components on the hull at this point; however with everything in place painting and detailing the main components would be difficult. So instead I glued on all the main components for the middle and top deck and primed the decks with Krylon Grey Primer (**Fig. 5**). I used Gator Glue, an acrylic photo-etch glue which dries crystal-clear, to fill in the port holes in the cabins and hull. Using Evergreen 0.005" clear plastic sheet I then cut out windows to fit in the wheelhouse and glued them into place with Gator Glue.

I painted all the deck surfaces with Vallejo 869 Basalt Grey with main deck cleats in Vallejo 801 Brass (**Fig. 6**). The deck storage boxes were painted with Vallejo 984 Flat Brown with the hinges picked out with Vallejo 863 Gunmetal Grey. I painted the forward monitor (pump base) Vallejo 957 Flat Red with the bow capstan winch painted Vallejo 950 Black. I glued them in place and then glued the main deck front and rear cabins onto the deck. I then built all the accessories and drilled out the ends of the nozzles with a # 77 (0.018") bit.

I hand-painted the accessories with various Vallejo paints (**Fig. 7**) and glued in place the ones called out for the main deck.

The firefighting figures are well-moulded considering the scale and after cleaning up the mould lines I painted them as per the instructions. The slicker was painted Vallejo 953 Flat Yellow with the trousers and shirts done in Vallejo 809 Royal Blue and the helmets and boots in Vallejo 862 Black Grey. Further research showed that the Fire Fighters who manned the Fire Fighter wore black rubber slickers so I repainted the figures' slickers Vallejo 861 Glossy Black (**Fig. 8**).

The rope bumper on the bow looks like it just sort of sits there but reference pictures show it anchored in place with cables attached to the hull side and a cable running through the openings in the gunwales at the bow. In my spares box I found some eyelets and a couple of turnbuckles which I rigged with 26-gauge wire and set into holes I drilled in the top of the bumper and sides of the hull. I then painted the rope bumper Vallejo 822 German Cam Black Brown and dry-brushed it with Vallejo 843 Cork Brown. The eyelets and turnbuckle were painted Vallejo 950 Black and the wire was picked out in Vallejo 864 Natural Steel (**Fig. 9**).

The water tower assembly went together without problems; I needed just a little filler along a small part of the back corner joint. The instructions would have you mount the tower support frame to the main deck and standing upright to support the tower when it's in the stored position. However photos of the Fire Fighter clearly show that the support frame was attached to the tower on hinges and swung out to rest on the deck when the tower was lowered to the stored position. I made a couple of hinges with Evergreen 0.060" angle stock and glued the tower support into place on the tower and cut off the mounting pins at the bottom of the support legs.

I painted the tower with Krylon Satin Black Primer & Paint. Then, based on photos of the deck, I made two support bases that keep the support frame legs from shifting on the deck in the stored position. The bases were made from small squares of card stock with small pieces of Evergreen 0.060" angle stock and painted Vallejo 869 Basalt Grey to match the deck and glued in place over the frame mounting holes located on the deck between the two stern barrows (**Fig. 10**).

Photos of the Fire Fighter show that the upper railing of the top deck was a chain and I had a small length of 40 links per inch chain that was the correct size but way too short. Several HO Railroad sites advertised the chain but had no stock on hand. A quick call to the good folks at Hobby House in Ottawa had two packs of chain in the mail and in my hands in a week. Using Gorilla Thin Super Glue with Tamiya accelerator I quickly strung the upper rail.

Having already primed and painted the middle and top decks I started to hand paint the decks and their components. The motor launch and lifeboat were painted Vallejo 870 Medium Sea Grey with their covers painted Panzer Aces 304 Canvas. The monitors were painted Vallejo 862 Black Grey with the valve wheels painted Vallejo 957 Flat Red. The water tower base and boat cranes were painted Vallejo 862 Black Grey with the smoke stack base done in Vallejo 995 German Grey. The stack itself was painted Vallejo 912 Tan Yellow with the spotlight, bell and horn picked out in Vallejo 802 Brass. The upper deck trim, smoke stack cap and railings were painted Vallejo 950 Black.

With everything painted I glued the middle and top decks together but had to trim off the mounting guide ridges for the pilot house on the top deck in order for it to fit properly (**Fig. 11**). I then glued the upper decks into position on the main deck cabins and again had to trim off the mounting guides in order to get a positive fit. I installed the ladders, water tower with hose pipe, spotlights and water manifolds with nozzles. I applied the kit ship name plate decals by floating them in a pool of Future Floor Finish then pressing them down into the Future and applying more Future over top. I had an American Flag decal in my spares box which I mounted on a piece of white-painted lead foil which I glued onto a small length of wire. I drilled a couple of holes with a # 77 (0.018") bit in the flag staff, inserted the flag wire into the staff and secured it in place with CA glue and then glued the staff on the deck. Normally the Fire Fighter would be manned by more than four crew members but that's all the kit provided so I glued them on the boat in positions that I thought made sense (**Fig. 12**).

The Fire Scene

I wanted to display the Fire Fighter in a dynamic setting. Originally I had thought to have her just sitting in the water performing a celebratory display with all nozzles spraying around the boat. Then I got ambitious and thought with everything being 1:87 or HO scale I could utilize HO structures. I formulated a plan based on a photo of the Fire Fighter in the mid-1950's tackling a warehouse fire on a jetty. So with this plan in mind I asked my fellow modellers at IPMS Halifax who dabbled in railroad modelling if anyone had a HO structure they were willing to part with. My friend Dave answered the call and offered up the Heljan HO 807 Brewery structure which was exactly what I had in mind (**Fig. 13**).

The brewery kit was an old one and was missing the roofs to the small building and drying shed. The buildings went together very well and I was very happy with the fit at the corners. I used Revell Contacta liquid glue to build the structures and found it to be an excellent choice, with the glue reacting well to the buildings' plastic and quickly creating a strong bond. I assembled the smaller buildings first and made the missing roofs from 0.030" plastic sheet cut out from an advertising billboard I had. The small brick building had a simple sloped roof (**Fig. 14**) but the wood drying shed had a normal 'A'-shaped roof and I used a strip of Evergreen # 292 0.080" 'L'-angle to cover the cap of the roof. I reinforced the roof joints at the wall tops with Evergreen #168 strip 0.080" x 0.198" and I primed the structures with Krylon Grey (**Fig. 15**). I painted the drying shed Burnt Umber and the roof in Coal Black using acrylic craft paint. Since the drying shed was of wood construction I dry-brushed the wood areas with Storm Cloud Grey acrylic craft paint to give it a worn, aged look. The small brick building was airbrushed a mix of 80% Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown and 20% Tamiya XF-68 NATO Brown with a wash of Santa Fe Rose acrylic craft paint and the roof was painted with Coal Black acrylic craft paint. I also picked out the window sills and brickwork over the windows with the Santa Fe Rose.

I next built the tall building which went together as nicely as the smaller ones. Leaving off the building roofs, I primed it with Krylon Grey primer (**Fig. 16**). I painted the structure with a 50:50 mix of Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown and XF-79 Linoleum Deck Brown which gave me a redder brown tone than the small brick building. I dry-brushed the brickwork with Red Oxide acrylic craft paint then masked off around the buildings trim and painted the trim with Westport Grey acrylic craft paint with the bottom brickwork painted with Storm Cloud Grey acrylic craft paint. I also painted the "1907" date panel in Vallejo 884 Stone Grey. I dry-brushed the trim and bottom brickwork with Charcoal Grey acrylic craft paint (**Fig. 17**).

I then built the large building but I decided to paint it with a slightly redder tone than the tall building so I mixed 60% Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown and 40 % XF-79 Linoleum Deck Brown. I masked off around the trim and bottom brickwork (**Fig. 18**) and painted them with the Westport Grey and Storm Cloud Grey as I had on the tall building (**Fig. 19**). I dry-brushed the brickwork like the tall building with Red Oxide which brought out the brick detail and turned the brick even a redder tone (**Fig. 20**). I then dry-brushed the trim and bottom brickwork with the Charcoal Grey and gave the brickwork of both buildings a wash of the Charcoal Grey which ages the look of the bricks.

With the building done I now addressed the windows and doors with the kit provided window frames, doors and clear windows that all fit nicely in their openings. In order to facilitate painting I mounted the window frames and doors on strips of masking tape, which I then taped to pieces of cardboard. I first primed them with Krylon Grey primer (**Fig. 21**) and I painted the window frames of the tall building with Blue Haze acrylic craft paint. I wanted to depict the large building and the base building as newer structures so I painted the window frames and doors Tamiya XF-50 Field Blue which is a darker shade than the Blue Haze. I then dry-brushed all the window frames and doors with Vallejo 870 Medium Sea Grey to age them a bit. Once dry I glued the clear windows to the frames and doors using Gator Glue except for five windows, where I left the glass completely off of four window frames and cut the fifth window glass in half. Then using the Revell Contacta liquid glue I secured the frames and doors in the buildings openings. I wasn't planning to build building interiors

but I did build a couple of platforms, one in the tall building to hold a battery pack and two in the large building to mount a fire.

Battery pack? Fire? What's he talking about?

For a dynamic composition the Fire Fighter has to be fighting a fire and I wanted flames roiling out of several windows and on the roof of the large building. I also wanted to add an animated feature to the scene using flickering LEDs to give life to the flames. I studied pictures of building fires and of the Fire Fighter at several harbour fires and started to plan my inferno. I had bought several packs of those LED flickering candles and simply took them apart and removed the LEDs. I drilled holes in the platforms I had mounted just below the windows and glued four LEDs in place and soldered them in a parallel circuit. I made the flames using spare bits of quilt batting donated by my wife and coated them with Golden Heavy Gel Medium. I laid the base of the flames on top of the LEDs and pulled the batting through the windows and shaped them to resemble flames. Using the gel I affixed additional uncoated batting to the tops of the flames to represent smoke. The gel medium dries clear and is easily painted. I first painted the flames with Vallejo 937 Transparent Yellow and picked out the highlights with Vallejo 935 Transparent Orange and when dried I gave the flames a wash with Tamiya Clear Orange. The smoke was painted with Vallejo 869 Basalt Grey near the flame tops and Vallejo 862 Black Grey for the rest of the smoke. I hooked up the battery pack to the LED circuit to test the appearance of the fire (**Fig. 22**).

I worked out the size of the roof fire and drilled out six holes in the roof panel and glued LED's into the holes and as with the windows I soldered their leads in a parallel circuit. When I installed the roof I would connect the two circuits to the battery pack. Without an interior in the buildings I had to blank out the windows so you couldn't see right through the buildings. I found a HO railway site had a tutorial on building HO buildings that showed how to blank off the windows using black craft paper. With the black craft paper in hand it was easy to measure, cut and glue the paper into place behind the windows solving the see through problem. I painted and mounted the small water tank to the large buildings roof adding a piece of black-painted wood dowel to represent the tank's stem pipe into the building and then set the roof aside.

I then turned my attention to the base for the scene. With the Fire Fighter being a full-hulled model and not willing to cut the hull down I would have to excavate a hole for the boat to fit into. I decided that I would need a two inch thick base for the boat/harbour and a one inch thick base for the buildings and jetty. The boat/harbour base would measure 24" x 38" with the building/jetty base being 33' x 12". However, I decided to make the building/jetty base an L-shape extending the short arm of the 'L' the full width of 24". I used 2" pink insulating foam cut to size for the boat/harbour base and 1" pink foam for the building/jetty base which I glued together with GL Premium Adhesive. Then using a sheet of .030" plastic I cut out the 'L'-shape of the building/jetty base and glued it in place using UHU contact glue. This gave me a smooth and receptive surface to mount the buildings and other items for the jetty. I then carved out the hollow for the fire boat and a smaller one for a small pleasure craft that would be floating nearby watching the action. I got the small craft, a couple of lengths of track and a railway tanker and crane car from my friend Jim. I disassembled the small boat and cut apart the windows and painted the interior Vallejo 869 Basalt Grey with the bench seat painted Vallejo 940 Saddle Brown. I reassembled the boat and painted the cabin Vallejo 899 Prussian Blue with the gunwale trim painted Vallejo 862 Black Grey. The wooden upper deck was painted Vallejo 846 Mahogany Brown and the upper hull stripe painted Vallejo 950 Black. I masked off the black stripe and painted the hull Vallejo 957 Flat Red. In my spare decal box I found a suitable name for the boat and applied the name "Classy Peg" to the stern of the boat then added three HO scale spectators to the boat (**Fig. 23**).

Based on reference pictures of various jetties I decided to make the main one with a corrugated iron facing with wooden bumper posts. To make the iron facing I separated a piece of cardboard. Cardboard used for boxes are usually made by sandwiching a corrugated paper form between two sheets of thick paper so I stripped off one sheet of the outer paper exposing the corrugations (**Fig. 24**).

I cleaned the corrugations up with a small brass brush removing small bits of paper stuck on surface. I then cut the cardboard into 1" strips to match the height of the jetty and painted them Coal Black with acrylic craft paint (**Fig. 25**).

I then painted the strips with Vallejo Weathering Effects 821 Rust Texture and along the bottom edge I painted Vallejo 850 Medium Olive to represent marine growth at the waterline. Using a 3/16" wood dowel cut to 1" lengths I soaked them in a solution of Burnt Umber craft paint and rubbing alcohol which gave the wood a tarred look. I painted the bottom of each post green to match the corrugated strips and glued a post every scale 10' onto the corrugated strips and then dry fitted it in place on the face of the jetty to see how it would look (**Fig. 26**).

For the leg of the L-shaped jetty and since I had some HO scale sheets of stone block I decided to have a stone face with a set of stone steps providing access to the water surface. I had a resin casting of stone steps that I reduced the height of to 1" and I cut 1/4" off of the back to reduce the width. I drilled holes along the top outer edge and glued in lengths of 26-gauge wire to act as posts. I then glued a length of the 40 links per inch chain to the posts and added small balls to the top of the posts. I got the balls from a Brita water filter that I took apart. I then added two styrene disks with brass wire rings as tie up points to the face of the steps (**Fig. 27**).

I painted the upper surface of the steps and platform Vallejo 880 Khaki Grey and the face of the jetty and steps with Vallejo 995 German Grey dry-brushed with Vallejo 870 Medium Sea Grey.

With the L-shape I now had an area that I had to fill to eliminate a large void in the scene. I decided to make a small oil storage tank area and a material storage area in the void. Using the casings from the LED candles I glued two of them together, added a small dome cap and an access ladder made from plastic screen material. I made four of them and added ground piping and painted them with Krylon Grey primer & paint. I also made a security fence with an access gate using plastic screen material and Evergreen 0.030" rod which I painted Vallejo 864 Natural Steel (**Fig. 28**). I made items for the storage area such as steel pipes made from plastic straws, dental floss and wood strips and small blocks of Styrofoam covered with white glue soaked tissue paper. I also made 21 shipping pallets with Evergreen strips consisting of 14 parts each to distribute about the scene. I added a walkway along the top of the stone faced jetty using a strip of 0.030" styrene with lines scored across it like on a concrete sidewalk.

I placed everything on the base to get a better picture of how things were looking and if I had filled all the voids. Satisfied that things looked ok I removed everything and painted the building and jetty base with Tamiya XF-53 Neutral Grey and gave it a wash with Charcoal Grey craft paint. I also gave the water area its first coat of Blue-Grey acrylic craft paint. I glued the buildings in place and because the building kit came with a chimney I scratch-built an incinerator with external fuel tank to mount on the side of the small building with the drying shed. I painted the incinerator Vallejo 950 Black dry-brushed with Vallejo 995 German Grey. The fuel tank was painted with Vallejo 869 Basalt Grey and weathered with Panzer Aces 301 Light Rust. The fuel tank was mounted on scale wood strips that were painted Vallejo 884 Stone Grey. I cut short lengths of 3/16" wood dowel and painted them Vallejo 862 Black Grey with Vallejo 953 Flat Yellow and glued them around the fuel tank as a barrier. I added fuel lines to the tank which I ran into the building's side (**Fig. 29**).

I added Valvoline oil company decals to the storage tanks and then glued them in place and added a couple of control valves and mounted the fence. I painted the jetty sidewalk with Vallejo 880 Khaki Grey and lightly dry-brushed with Vallejo 884 Stone Grey and then glued the jetty facing and steps in place. With scale lumber I made bumper stops to run along the edge of the iron-faced jetty. The bumper stops were painted with Vallejo 941 Burnt Umber and glued along the jetty's edge. I made bollards for the jetty using push pins with the metal pin cut off and the head glued to pieces of 0.030" sheet styrene. The bollards were base coated with Vallejo 865 Black Grey and painted with Vallejo Weathering Effects 821 Rust Texture with a lightly dry-brushing of Vallejo 864 Natural Steel. I also added a couple of access ladders to the iron jetty's face made from Evergreen 0.060" angle and strips which I painted Vallejo 865 Black Grey. I painted the ties on the railway track with Burnt Umber acrylic craft paint and the rails with the Vallejo Weathering Effects 821 Rust Texture with a silver pencil run along the top of the rails where the train wheels would run. Using Gorilla super glue gel I secured the track in place along the edge of the jetty. I then scratch built a track end bumper and glued it in place (**Fig. 30**).

I made extra items to add to the storage area, painted them and glued them in place. I then coated the area with PVA glue and added static grass to the storage area and along the strip in front of the security fence (**Fig. 31**).

I acquired three HO scale mid-1950's vehicles and a number of HO figures from Dave which I painted up and glued in place around the scene.

The next thing to do was to work out the fire stream of each nozzle. The fire stream is defined as "A stream of water from the time it leaves the nozzle until it reaches the desired point in the proper configuration". I placed The Fire Fighter in its place on the diorama (**Fig. 32**) and determined where I wanted each fire stream to go. I had to model the water impact points and flow on the ground and on the building before I could secure The Fire Fighter in its place in the harbour. Using Golden Regular Gel medium gloss I laid down the first layer of water from the base of the building over the jetty and into the harbour (**Fig. 33**). I then brushed on the gel medium on the face of the building and part of the roof and then affixed segments of quilt batting coated with the gel to the building at the impact points of the fire streams. I reasoned that if there was an oil tanker railcar in front of a building on fire the fire boat crew would direct a stream of water onto the tanker to

ensure there was no heat buildup in the tanker. So I positioned the railway oil tanker car on the track in front of the building where I wanted it and made a fire stream impact on the side of the oil tanker (**Fig. 34**). I expanded the water splash and runoff areas and realized that for easier access I would have to apply some of the harbour water along the jetty before I secured The Fire Fighter in place. Using a plastic palette knife I spread and textured Golden Extra Heavy Gel medium over the harbour surface along the front edge of the jetty working the gel into the corrugations of the jetty face (**Fig. 35**). I expanded the splash area again and satisfied with the layout of the water on the jetty and around the tracks I secured the oil tanker railcar in place on the track with Gorilla thick gel CA glue.

Using “No More Nails” adhesive I glued the Fire Fighter in place and applied the heavy gel medium to the rest of the harbour area. When dry I touched up spots where a couple of felt marker lines had bled through the gel coat with the Blue-Grey craft paint and applied two coats of Liquitex Gloss Medium & Varnish to the harbour surface. Using 26-gauge wires inserted into the holes I had previously drilled in the nozzles I ran the wire to the fire stream impacts and directly at the fire and cut the wires to length. I glued the wires in place and then painted the wires with Vallejo 993 White Grey. Based on several pictures of the Fire Fighter in action any nozzle not able to direct water on the fire was aimed into the harbour possibly in order to maintain a balanced pressure by having all nozzles spraying. Only a guess but that’s what several pictures show, therefore I aimed one of the nozzles into the harbour (**Fig. 36**). I built up an impact site for the fire stream shooting into the harbour and using a brush I applied the extra-heavy gel medium to all the wires building up some thickness on the wires. Using the regular gel medium I glued quilt batting to the wires simulating water mist like you would see from a powerful water stream (**Fig. 37**). I painted the main part of the fire streams with Vallejo 951 White and let everything dry for a couple of days and then applied a couple of coats of the Liquitex Gloss Medium & Varnish onto the fire streams giving the water a nice sheen, thus finishing the display (**Fig. 38**).

Conclusion

The Fire Fighter kit is one that requires some TLC but builds into a nice rendition of the famous fire boat. I felt that the viewer could not fully appreciate the significance of the Fire Fighter without it being involved in what it was designed for; fighting fires. Being HO scale helped to facilitate the building of the scene and in making the display more interesting. For anyone looking to build an example of an historic New York City fireboat this kit will fit the bill. The Fire Fighter diorama was awarded a silver medal at the 2018 CAMS Spring Show and won the “First Among Equals” viewers’ choice award.

References

□ capecodfd.com

□ americasfireboat.org

About the Author

Barry Maddin retired from the CAF in 2009 after a 37-year career as a Navy Stoker, an Army Vehicle Technician, and finally as an Army EME officer. In 2009 he and his wife moved to Truro NS from Ottawa where they built their retirement home, including a hobby workshop, which is strictly off limits to the cats. Barry started building models before he could spell ‘plastic’ and currently builds mostly 1:35 WW II armour and military vehicles, although he does dabble in other areas. He is a member of AMPS and has been a member of IPMS Canada since 2000.

CF-188A 2017 Demo Team Hornet

Dublin, Ireland

When the box art for this kit first popped up on social media I pre-ordered it right away. Having seen photos of the unveiling of the 2017 RCAF Demo Team commemorative scheme I knew I just had to do a model of it. With the large maple leaf motif on the spine and the theme carrying all over the topside I knew it would be a gorgeous addition to my display cabinet.

Kinetic have been going from strength to strength over the past few years improving their quality with each of their releases and their F-18 family really are first class, and with subjects like this they are on a winner.

THE BUILD

As always with my builds I started with the sub-assemblies as I like to get them out of the way early so they are not hanging over my head at the end.

Undercarriage and Wheel Wells

The first job I did was build the undercarriage. The nose gear comprised nine pieces and went together very well. I did have to check references here as the instructions did tend to be a bit vague on the placement of some parts. However, when built up and painted they looked very good indeed, as did the main gear. The wheel wells were painted white, too.

I had most of the AMMO MIG paints handy that were called out so in the main I followed the instructions here. There are also colour shout-outs for the major paint suppliers so you should have most of what you need in your supplies.

The Cockpit and Canopy

My attention then turned to the cockpit which was given a coat of Ghost Gray. I masked the side panels and sprayed them Tamiya Rubber Black. A bit of extra work but worth the effort I think. The control instrument panel was painted by hand. I firstly painted the panels, then dry brushed. After that had dried I picked out the knobs and bobs with Citadel acrylic paint. The whole lot was sprayed with Alclad Aqua Gloss and left to cure overnight before a pin wash of brown/black oil paint was applied. The seat has etched harnesses (not mentioned in instructions) and is nice and busy when assembled and painted. I must say when the cockpit was built up, painted and in place I think most modelers will be happy enough with the level of detail.

The kit canopy has a mould seam that needs to be dealt with, so careful scraping and sanding was the order of the day.

Airframe assembly

In general, main assembly was a breeze. A few low points include the refuelling probe cover, the fit of the canopy itself and the air intake. The nose section in general needs careful alignment too.

A small but very noticeable omission was the round GSP/INS antenna disk, prominently located on the dorsal hump just aft of the canopy on the spine. A decal is provided but this needs to be in relief so I cut a disk from stock plastic and placed it on the model.

There are some nice features too like the strengthening plates on the fins and various vent grills supplied as photo etched parts.

The overall fit was good although I did have to clean up a lot of seams with a smear of Mr. Hobby Dissolved Putty. A high point for me personally was the posable wings. These gave the model a natural "Hornet at rest" stance. It took three sessions to do the main assembly and clean up all the wee issues. I still wasn't happy with the sit of the front canopy section but in the end I didn't want to break it so left well enough alone.

PAINTING

The painting started with Rubber Black being sprayed around the glazing. When this was dried I primed with three coats Tamiya White Primer straight from the can. Even though it dried smooth I gave the whole model a good polish up with Micro Mesh just to be sure.

I painted the nose tip with a mix of Flesh and Weathered Olive and masked it. I also painted and masked the steel areas at the afterburner section at this time.

I used MIG 047 Satin White for the stripe along the fuselage. There is both a decal and masking template provided for the stripe and I used the latter. I taped over the template with clear tape, then applied 40 mm Kabuki tape and carefully cut along the guide lines with a new scalpel blade. My method worked, however I found the masks to be a bit short when offered up to the model so I did have to improvise a bit but nothing too dramatic. With all the white areas masked it was time to give the bottom surfaces a coat of MIG-203 Light Ghost Gray. When this was dry and masked it was time for the main event, the red. I decided on Tamiya XF07 mixed with Mr. Color Leveling Thinner. I gave the topside several good coats until I was happy that all had decent coverage.

I left everything overnight to cure and the next morning applied four thin coats of Alclad Aqua Gloss. This dried to a glass-like finish and I was ready for "that" decal sheet.

THE DECALS

There are a lot of complex shapes and placements for the decals and I was glad that the instructions for these were spot on and relatively easy to follow. It took me a weekend to get them all in place but the decals themselves behave impeccably which made the job all the easier. When given a coat of Mr. Hobby Mr. Softer they hugged every contour (and there are a lot of contours). These really are the main event of this kit and they do not disappoint. The model just became more alive as I placed each decal.

When I was happy I sealed all with another coat of Aqua Gloss and then I had to make a difficult decision. The real plane has a glass-like finish, I had a glass-like finish, however, to my eye it looked more like a die-cast toy rather than a model. I gave the folds and prominent lines a pin wash of Kleer mixed with distilled water and a drop of German Grey. This did improve matters somewhat but in the end, I decided to cut the gloss down a tad by misting Aqua Gloss. I had the finish I was looking for. Not as shiny as the real thing but not a toy either.

CONCLUSION

Final assembly was completed in two sessions and there on the bench was a very striking model indeed. This is a lovely model. It has a few small issues but should be well within the reach of most modelers to complete and when you do complete it you will be sooooo glad to have it in your collection. I know I am. Roll on the Blue Angels edition!!

Acknowledgements

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About the author:

Gerry Doyle has been building models for the best part of 45 years now, almost continuously. He mainly does aircraft but has been known to dabble in armour and figure painting too. He spent 16 years in the Irish Army Reserve. He writes for several magazines and websites and has also been featured in modelling themed reference books. He is an active member of several modelling groups and associations and loves nothing better than spending an evening with fellow modellers discussing the hobby. He lives in Dublin, Ireland with his wife and two sons.

A German Navy

Br.1150 Atlantic 1

By Bernie Hengst

C#2020

Toronto, Ontario

History

In 1958, NATO invited competitive bids to find a successor to the outdated Lockheed P2V Neptune for the anti-submarine role. A total of 24 projects from 9 countries were received and the Breguet Br.1150 was awarded the contract. The consortium for the production was made up of companies from France, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and Italy.

After the first flight on 21 October 1961, it was four more years before the first production aircraft were delivered to France and Germany. The French "*Aeronavale*" received 40, the German "*Marine*" 20, the Dutch "*Koninklijke Marine*" 9 and the Italian "*Marina Militare*" 18 aircraft.

In 1971 five of the German Atlantics were modified to perform the Communication Intelligence (COMINT) and Signal Intelligence (SIGINT) roles. When the Atlantics were retired in 2006 the COMINT/SIGINT versions served another few years.

The Kit

The Revell model of the Atlantic was sent to me by a friend in Germany. The large box was filled with eight sprues of light grey-blue plastic with 157 parts and a small sprue of 17 clear parts. The instruction booklet of 20 pages covers the 75 steps of the build.

This is a large model, similar in size to the C-130 Hercules or the C-160 Transall. Decals are included for Dutch, French and German aircraft. I wanted to finish and paint the model as a replica of an Atlantic of Marinefliegergeschwader 3 "*Graf Zeppelin*" in the retirement paint scheme worn on Airday 2006. This was made easy for me by Revell, as they included the codes 61+11 which were the German markings on the decal sheet.

The Build begins...

Before starting to cut plastic, I printed out pictures from my computer files of the aircraft, of the exterior, the wheel wells and the weapons bay. The latter pictures helped me to mix the interior colour using Humbrol #83 and #95.

I started cutting and cleaning the plastic parts for the cockpit, fuselage and wings, making sure to use the ones for German aircraft (*the kit includes parts for Dutch and French aircraft*).

I took great care to test-fit and glue the inside fuselage parts as they have to fit later into the outer fuselage halves. As I found out later it was still tight, and required some careful sanding for a good fit. This inner fuselage parts gives the completed fuselage a lot of strength. All the wing, engine and landing gear doors were also cut off the spruces, cleaned up and the small parts for ease of handling stuck on masking tape loops which were themselves attached to stir sticks for ease of spraying. (**Fig. 1**) Some parts that needed two different colours were masked and all these parts were placed in a large cardboard lid and taken to the spray booth for the interior yellow-beige colour. **Fig. 2** shows the sprayed parts.

I assembled the parts for the cockpit and the inside fuselage, adding ballast weight in the open spaces under the cockpit floor to prevent the model becoming a "tail-sitter". The front landing gear looked strong and the recommended 30 grams (± 2 ounces) didn't look to be enough for my liking, so some additional weight was added at the front of the interior fuselage where Revell indicates the nose weight is to be placed. (**Fig. 3**)

The two outside fuselage halves had their two round windows installed and the halves were tested around the inner fuselage section and after some careful sanding of the inner surfaces the outer fuselage halves were glued together, trapping the inner part. I filled the seams where necessary, using Mr. Surfacer 500 and sanded them a day later.

I did not like Revell's assembly instruction of the two cockpit sections separately to the fuselage, first the right with all the cockpit interior and then the left. I decided to glue them together and when properly dry and all the seams properly filled, sanded and polished to add them to the fuselage as a hole unit. Some of the seams were strengthened on the inside with Crazy Glue. I had to shorten the two locating pins on the inside rear of each of the cockpit section to a millimeter and

flattened them to the rear so that they could be pushed in the recesses on the fuselage. Sliding the complete cockpit onto the fuselage was a bit of a struggle but it worked. I carefully applied small amounts of liquid cement to the joint line and after it had dried, filled the seam with Mr. Surfacer 500 which was after another two days, sanded with fine wet sandpaper and polishing sponges. (Fig. 4)

In between various filling, drying and sanding sessions on the fuselage, the engines, wings and tailplanes were assembled, seams were filled, sanded and polished. (Fig. 5)

Before attaching the wings and control surfaces I added the cockpit glazing, and masked them when the glue had set, having polished them as well as the four fuselage windows.

The wheel wells were masked next and wooden doweling sections were inserted in the wheel wells to allow the model to stand on its own during the convoluted masking and spraying sessions.

The wings and control surfaces were joined to the fuselage and I must say that very little filling and sanding was necessary to ready the model for the spray booth. A few extra parts had to be installed on the fuselage and the wingtips specific to the German Marine version, and I also closed the weapons bay permanently at this time.

A lengthy painting session applied the Tamiya white primer over the whole model, from the bottom to the top. After two days of drying came the usual finding of faults, refilling small blemishes, re-sanding and re-priming. I was so pleased with the final look of the white primer that I didn't bother with a white finish coat. (Fig. 6)

During this time the landing gear, wheels and other small add-ons were cleaned up and readied for spraying and later application to the sprayed model.

Painting

The lower fuselage up to the top of the wing, the lower tail surfaces, the tail boom as well as the lower engine nacelles and all wing leading edges were carefully masked with Tamiya tape (what would we do without it?!). This masked line divides the white lower surfaces from the German flag "sash" that runs the length of the fuselage.

On the fuselage the lower line for the yellow colour was already masked (from the white paint masking described above) and to simplify the masking and spraying I masked the very upper edge for the black next, which went also just below the front of the canopy with lengths of 3 mm wide strip of Tamiya tape and filled in the spaces in between with painter's green masking tape. The edges for all the tapes were rubbed down firmly with a Letraset applicator. This kept me busy for a few days. (Fig. 7)

Now the bluish-grey camouflage colour was sprayed onto the upper horizontal tail surfaces, the upper wings, engine nacelles and the top of the fuselage. I experimented with a few ModelMaster paints and I must have used ModelMaster RLM 65 with a little white for the top of the fuselage, top wings and tail surfaces. I let this dry for two days.

I now removed the green masking tape on the side of the fuselage and the fin, and the Tamiya tape in front of the canopy. I removed the 3 mm Tamiya tape and then placed a new Tamiya tape mask so that it just covered the border line of the blue-grey camouflage colour on the top of the fuselage. This would be the top edge of the black line of the flag "sash". The top of the fuselage was covered with the green tape to protect it from overspray.

Now the Yellow [I used Modelmaster RLM 04] was sprayed. (Fig. 8) I did not mask the top boundary for this colour as the red and eventually the black colours would cover it well. After another two days the yellow was covered with Tamiya tape. Making the stripes on both sides of the fuselage even was made easier by following the panel lines, judging the distances to the next panel "cross" line and angling the tape accurately by matching the "cross" lines again, and so on until it was masked to my satisfaction. Green tape was used to cover the yellow completely. Next the Red [I used Modelmaster RLM 23] was sprayed and I felt like I was on the winning side of the spraying session. Two day later the red was masked the same way and the last colour, matt black, was sprayed. The most difficult parts of the masking was the front of the canopy. Thin curved strips, cut with a circle cutter, made that job a lot easier,

After two days of drying, all the masking was removed and the only very small mistake I found was in front of the canopy with the black line. Some careful masking, a little sanding with fine paper and a little spraying with the bluish-grey colour

corrected this. (Figs. 9, 10, 11 and 12) While still on the wooden stands the model was given a coat of Alclad II Gloss Klear Kote.

Decals and Final Steps

Once dry, the model was decaled and with 126 of them to apply it took two days to complete. After cleaning off any decal glue residue the model was sprayed with Alclad II Klear Kote Semi-Matt.

During all the drying times I sprayed and painted all the landing gears, wheels and propellers. Now the wooden dowels were removed from the gear wells and the landing gears, tires and landing gear doors were installed. Blade aerial and the wire aerial made from AZ Line were added and the last items, the pitot tubes and the propellers were installed. As it is a freshly-painted aircraft weathering was restricted very lightly to the rear of the engine and to the ailerons and flaps.

A very large and colourful model was ready for the show case.

About the Author

Bernie Hengst was born in Germany, where he apprenticed as a butcher and as a cook; he also served for a year in the West German Army. Immigrating to Canada in 1963, he worked in the Chateau Frontenac, the Royal York Hotel and the Scarborough Golf Club; he then taught cooking for 30 years. He is also an avid gardener. He started modelling at age 12, carving models out of wood. Building paper models came next and the first plastic model was a Renwall 105 mm Howitzer. After building a few armour dioramas he switched again to 1/72 scale aircraft. Bernie has been an IPMS Canada and IPMS Toronto member since the early 1970s and is also a member of the Toronto Aero Buffs.

Page 27

“Space Odyssey”

AMT’s classic 1:25 Ford van gets an “out of this world” custom paint job

Massimo Santarossa
IPMS Canada C#6052
Calgary, Alberta

Background

In 1978, American-International produced the movie “Matilda,” the story of a boxing kangaroo. If you have never heard of it, don’t worry. It was a poor film that tested so badly it was not given a wide release. The only thing worse was the paint job on the 1977 Ford Econoline van featured in the movie. AMT produced a kit version of this van, and yours truly built one as a youth. Nostalgia being what it is, the desire to revisit this build, but with hopefully improved skills, developed.

The Kit

After searching online for a model that wasn’t going to cost more than the real thing, an original boxing was found. This time, however, the yellow, brown and orange paint scheme was traded in for something less garish. The large, clear bubble on the roof was reminiscent of an astrodome, perfect for star gazing from a secluded field or camp site, thus came the inspiration for a space-based finish. This was going to be an adventure, not only because it was trip down memory lane, but also because it would be my first attempt at a custom paint job.

About the author:

Like most plastic afflicted individuals, Massimo has been building since he was a young boy. He considers himself an omnivorous modeller, building everything from planes to ships, tanks to trucks, although he does have a soft spot for aviation, usually with a maple leaf on it. This may stem from the fact that for the last 30 years he has flown one type of airplane or another, the latest being the Boeing 787. Originally from British Columbia, he now calls Calgary home, along with his wife and daughter.

Page 33

A Captured

Bf 109B

Brian Latour

C#3806

Ottawa, Ontario

When IPMS Ottawa decided that their annual theme contest for 2019 would be “In Enemy Hands”, it didn’t take me too long to decide what I wanted to do. The Bf 109 is a very popular aircraft, but for a variety of reasons, I generally avoid subjects that have a connection to WW II Nazi Germany. However, this contest would give me a chance to do a 109 in such a way that sidestepped the whole modelling Nazi stuff issue. So, as soon as the contest theme was decided upon, I started Googling around to see if any of the Condor Legion 109s were captured by the Republicans, and lo and behold, they managed to snag one in late 1937.

The catch with this plan is that I hadn’t actually built an airplane model since my youth, when I had all the time in the world to assemble kits with the skill and enthusiasm of my twelve year old self. When I got back into hobbying, it was mainly through painting figures and miniatures, then dabbling in the world of gundam modelling. Figures and busts are still my subject of choice, so my strengths are more in rendering of light and shadow with paint than in working with tiny photo-etch bits.

I did build a few cheap, old kits just to practice and try out techniques, making this my third model airplane in the last 15 years or so. That said, while there are a lot of transferable skills between all genres of modelling, there are some stylistic and technical influences from my figure painting background that influenced this build. There is a particular emphasis on painting on the highlights and shadows like you would do on figures, which normally isn’t present on aircraft models. I suspect that if you put it on a contest table next to other model aircraft and told a passer-by that one of the models on display was done by a figure painter, he or she would have little difficulty in guessing which one it was.

Background

The Spanish Civil War is an under-appreciated conflict. Left-leaning people from many countries volunteered to fight fascism in Spain and made the journey across the Pyrenees to the Republican zone. Both Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell volunteered to fight with the Republicans, as did Dr. Norman Bethune, who is quite possibly the most famous Canadian historical figure in the world (Justin Bieber excluded?) based on his later medical work in China.

Unfortunately the Fascists won, and those who fought against fascism ended up not exactly receiving a hero’s welcome when they returned home – branded as “premature anti-fascists”, they were treated with suspicion by their home

governments, and to this day, there are very few monuments to the volunteers of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion in Canada.

So I thought it would be fitting to do a tribute to one small victory on the Republican side, the capturing of one of the German fighter aircraft supplied to their enemy. And, aside from my interest in the Spanish Civil War and my sympathies for the Republican cause (George Orwell's "Homage to Catalonia" is one of my favourite books), those red-yellow-purple markings are unique and quite eye-catching, and not the sort of thing you usually see on the tables at contests.

Of course, one small issue with these grand plans was the fact that I hadn't made a model aircraft in at least 15 years, so I used a couple of cheap kits as practice projects to figure out and refine some techniques before launching into a major project such as this one.

Reference material

I'm not one to spend a lot of time doing research, preferring to simply get on with the build and be happy to have something that looks "close enough". However, I did find two useful pieces of reference material in unusual sources. A friend did a 109B in the traditional Condor Legion scheme, so I was able to bounce some questions off of him. Second, someone in a Spanish Civil War modelling group did this exact plane and posted some pictures and reference material which was very helpful.

The Kit

When I started looking for kits, I was actually surprised at how little choice I had. While the Bf 109 is an incredibly popular subject, the early Jumo-powered versions from A to D are not – most kits are of the more well-known E, F, G and K versions.

I ended up settling on the AMG Bf 109B in 1:48 scale, based on the fact that it was the only 109B in stock at Wheels & Wings in Toronto. The kit was on the expensive side, but it included canopy masks and enough resin and photo-etch parts that I wouldn't need to "bling it out" with other aftermarket bits and bobs. I can't speak to accuracy and don't have the frame of reference to offer a definitive opinion on fit and finish, but it looked good enough for me.

The instructions are not super detailed and the kit includes multiple options for some parts, like the propeller, so some research may be necessary if you are going for accuracy. I had a number of false starts over the year leading up to the contest, where I would open the box, take one look at some of the small parts and the photo-etch fret, and then close it back up and back away slowly. Eventually, however, I got into it and got the project going.

Fit and Finish

Being a short-run kit from a small manufacturer, there are a number of places where fit and finish could be a bit better. However, it is engineered in such a way that alignment isn't a major issue. The underside of the wings is one piece, so there isn't much challenge with getting the dihedral correct on both sides. The horizontal stabilizer slots into the fuselage fairly securely and has well-located supports, so it is hard to mess that up. The only place where alignment may be an issue is the landing gear; with the narrow track of the landing gear on the 109, a slight misalignment on the gear can result in a big difference out at the wingtips.

While it goes together fairly neatly, the kit has a number of operations where there isn't much in the way of locating features. Notably, there are no locating pins when joining the two halves of the fuselage. The cowling is also a particularly tricky part, with multiple pieces that can be easily misaligned and cause problems.

Photo-Etch...

And then we get to the photo-etch. As this was my first experience with the stuff, working with it proved infuriating. It wasn't too bad when it was doing things like instrument panels where I'm laying a piece flat onto plastic, but some of the cockpit details and the bending and the folding did test my patience. Most the photo-etch is limited to the cockpit though, so once you clear that hurdle, it is smooth sailing from there on out.

The Office

When it came to painting the cockpit, I departed from the official instructions and glued the side panels to the inside of the fuselage halves rather than trying to glue them to the cockpit floor then hope that the entire bucket would fit perfectly inside the fuselage halves. There was plenty of detail, and the cockpit alone represented probably half of the photo-etch on the fret, including various levers, panels, seat belts, and a folded photo-etch map case attached to one side.

With the sides glued into the fuselage halves and the seats, control stick, and other details attached to the bottom, I primed the whole thing with black Stynylrez and sprayed it with Vallejo Green-Grey, which was my “close enough for government work” representation of RLM 02 Grey. I lightened it up with a bit of a cream colour to spray on some highlights, brush-painted the details, added some chipping, and then blended it all back together by spraying some Citadel shades through my airbrush.

Coming Together

With the cockpit assembled and painted, it was time to do the fuselage join. It was a little intimidating, but with a couple of scratch-built styrene tabs and a few attempts at dry-fitting, I managed to get it together, though there was some sanding, puttying, and rescribing involved. Putting a piece of masking tape over the cockpit opening to protect it, I continued on, focusing on installing all the engine details.

The Front End..

I primed and painted the engine with various acrylics, only to decide that trying to do any open maintenance panels was a fool's errand. So, I did a bunch of work for nothing, but at least I know it's there.

As mentioned before, the cowling was tricky. With eight pieces and a lot of simple butt joints, it's easy for a small alignment error to magnify itself and cause significant fit issues once you get around to installing the last pieces. Further, the area near the cowl guns can be tricky to sand without obliterating detail. And speaking of cowl guns, I'm pretty sure one of those little resin pieces is still in my carpet, so I had to make do with scratch-building a replacement out of round styrene stock.

The rest of the pieces went together nicely with no serious alignment issues and a reasonable amount of sanding and filling. I did leave off the landing gear and some other small parts for now; I just knew that trying to put them on before painting would only result in frustration as I would be likely to break them off several times in my spray booth.

Painting the canopy

I decided at some point that after all the frustration I went through on the cockpit photo-etch, that it would be a shame if it wasn't readily visible, so I would do an open canopy. The 109 in many of its variants has some rather extensive canopy framing. Fortunately, this kit provided pre-cut masks, however it only provided them for the outside surfaces. If you wanted to paint the framing on the inside of your canopy, which I did because I wanted to do an open canopy so the cockpit detail was visible, you would have to mask it yourself. I heard of a little trick from a friend for doing extensively-framed glass like the canopy of the 109 – mask all the framing going one direction first, paint it, let it dry, then mask off the framing going the other direction. While this did take a little longer because there were a lot of “wait for the paint/primer to cure” steps, it made for good results and spared me the frustration of trying to cut little squares out of masking tape precisely to fit.

With the inside of the canopy framing done, it was time to mask the outside. The pre-cut canopy masks were nice, however there were a couple fairly sharp curves where the somewhat-stiff masks were constantly wanting to pull up from the surface and flatten out, so I had to be careful of that when I was spraying.

Once masked, I glued in the front and back pieces using a very small amount of gel super glue (be sure to keep it open to the air to avoid fogging). For the centre section, I used Blue Tack to temporarily hold it in place and closed, preventing any overspray from getting into the cockpit while I painted the rest of the airframe. I then primed the entire thing in black Stynylrez, fixed up any seam line issues or surface imperfections that became visible after priming, then hit it with a second coat of primer.

The Fun Part

When it came to painting, I chose to paint it in two halves; do the bottom first and let it dry before tackling the top half. This way, there are fewer worries about how to hold the model as I painted it – and given that I haven't installed the landing gear yet, that is a bit of an issue.

Now, my approach to this is based partly on a background in painting figures and wargaming pieces. Here, you often emphasize shadows and highlights with your paints to make it “pop” from a couple of feet away. There is little concern for matching the exact colour, because aside from the fact that there is no generally accepted FS colour for magical space robots, you're going to be adding in so many highlights and shadows anyways that the ultimate colour on your model might go 20% lighter in the highlights, 20% darker in the shadows, and vary in hue as you go from shadow to highlight – meaning that there is little point in fretting over the exact right shades.

This is in some ways a more artistic approach than one that is based in trying to achieve an exact replica of the real thing. Not that it is any better or worse, mind you, but different, and it helps make the model “pop”, especially from a distance.

The bulk of the airframe was base-coated in Vallejo Metal Color Dark Aluminum out of the airbrush. With that down, I switched to their regular Aluminum colour for highlights on areas such as the upper curves of the fuselage, the leading edges of the wings and tail surfaces, and the centre of some of the panels for a little modulation. I took a similar strategy with the red; after masking off everything that I wanted to stay silver, I laid down a couple of coats of a deep crimson to cover up the metallic paint underneath. Then, on the upper surfaces, leading edges, and the centre of the panels, worked my way up to a bright red. The brightest tone was a mixture of Citadel Evil Sunz Scarlet, some Flame Red artist inks to kick the intensity and saturation up a notch, and perhaps a little P3 Khador Red Highlight, which despite its name, is actually a not-very-saturated orange.

With that dry, I placed a piece of masking tape over the landing gear bays and ran my X-Acto knife around the inside of the landing gear bays, removing all the tape covering the bays, but leaving the tape over the skin of the aircraft. From there, I sprayed the landing gear bays in Vallejo Green-Grey, which was my “close enough” approximation for RLM 02 Grey.

A Happy Accident

One other thing – as I was priming, I accidentally broke off the rudder, however this actually turned out to be fortuitous as it made masking and painting the markings on the rudder a lot easier. I simply sprayed the entire thing white, masked off the middle third, and painted the top red and the bottom purple, using a similar approach as on the stripes.

After removing the masking, I sprayed the lightest touch of Citadel's Druchii Violet shade over the white in a couple areas to preshade it, then sprayed it all with a Process Yellow acrylic artist ink, not being overly concerned with overspray onto the red and purple areas because yellow is such a weak colour that, while the pigment-dense ink will turn the white areas yellow, it won't make a difference over red or purple.

There are a couple of panels on the 109 near the nose section that are much darker than the rest of the aircraft, however they were small enough that I was able to brush paint them with a mixture of Vallejo Model Colour gunmetal grey and black and didn't bother with masking.

Throughout this process, I did make a few mistakes; either missing a surface imperfection or messing up a mould line. To deal with these, I isolated the panel where the mistake was with Tamiya masking tape around the panel lines, sanded it back down to bare plastic, and then re-primed and repainted. I had to do this on a few panels, but fortunately none that were either too big or too difficult to sand.

Weathering, Panel Lines, and Reinforcing Shadows

For the panel lines, I decided to do it the hard way, applying some sort of combination of washes, acrylic artist inks, and plenty of flow improver with my 10/0 brush. The result was perhaps a little more stark than I wanted, but once you weather

it and take a step back and look at it from “on the tables” distance, rather than three inches away, I think it looks pretty good.

When it came to weathering, I wanted to keep the chipping subtle, as is appropriate for aircraft models. I did some light sponge chipping on the leading edges, around access panels, etc. with some silver and some Khador Red Highlight on the red parts. I then took my 10/0 liner brush and laid in some streaks in the direction of the airflow with very thin paint, lots of flow improver and the lightest touch.

Next up, I took out some Citadel shades and got out my detail airbrush. I’ve been playing with spraying these through the airbrush a fair bit lately, and I think there are a lot of interesting effects you can get from them. The trick is, you have to just barely pull the trigger back, as pulling it back too far will cause huge problems. If you have this feature on your airbrush and you aren’t comfortable freehanding it, there is no shame in using the needle stop. While these shades are effective at sinking into recesses, if you airbrush them on just a tiny amount at a time, you can tint the underlying paint in interesting ways.

So, there are three things I want to do with these shades:

1. Reinforce the shadows

While I did have some nice highlights and shadows and modulation going, I wanted to reinforce it a little more. By spraying some Drakenhof Nightshade, which is a blue-black, I tinted certain areas like the underside, the wing roots, and the panel line areas. Fortunately, this is a good shade for both the metallics and the red – blue, as a cooler colour, will push the shadows in the red more towards a shaded crimson and let the highlights really “pop”, while it also works reasonably well over silver. Also, it dulls down the finish on your metallics a little, which isn’t bad for shadows.

If you go too aggressive at this stage and don’t like it, you can always build it back up again by respraying some highlight colour.

2. Add surface variation

The surface of an aircraft isn’t perfect, so I like to represent that on my model. I like to do this in two stages. First, start with Drakenhof Nightshade, their blue shade. Then follow up with something brown, like Nuln Oil or Agrax Earthshade. This creates a very interesting surface because not only do you have some variation in lightness and darkness, but you also have some cool/warm contrast, which provides another layer of visual interest.

For bonus points, you can get some interesting effects by masking along a panel line, either with tape or just by holding a business card along the panel line as you spray. This will make it so that the marbling and variation isn’t continuous across the surface, but rather there are breaks in the pattern as we go from panel to panel.

3. Add stains

These washes can also be used to add things like stains. I did some stains and streaks by simply starting from a point of origin like the oil cooler under the wings or the radiator area and spraying a little bit of the colour I wanted going back from there in the direction of the airflow.

For the soot from the exhaust and the guns, I simply sprayed on some Nuln Oil, again, spraying it wherever made sense to me based on the airflow around the plane. I was considering adding some dry pigments, but the Nuln Oil itself actually gave me such a good effect that I didn’t consider them necessary.

Final Bits

With the bulk of the plane done, there were a few little bits that I had painted separately to attach at the end. Landing gear, propeller, centre section of the canopy, and a few little protuberances like antennae and pitot tubes. I simply scraped away a tiny bit of paint, installed the part with either plastic cement or CA glue, and then touched up the paint in that area with a brush. The dorsal antenna was pinned into the surface with some thin brass rod, and a piece of EZ-Line was added and painted silver to add the wire – just before I found out that the particular aircraft which was captured by the Republicans didn’t actually have that antenna and wire. Oh well, C’est la vie. I don’t build for fanatical accuracy anyways.

The Base

I chose to make a simple base for this model to emphasize its Spanish Republican service. The red-yellow-purple tricolour of the Second Spanish Republic is very distinctive, but as this aircraft doesn't have any roundels, the only yellow and purple is on the rudder at the extreme back of the plane, partly obscured by the horizontal stabilizer. So, I chose to incorporate the tricolour into the base, bringing in the yellow and purple that is kind of missing from most of the rest of the plane.

Conclusion

This was an interesting experience. My previous experience with model aircraft fell into two categories. First, there were the aircraft I built in my childhood, which I'm sure would horrify me if I were to look at them today. Second, there were the two archaic Polish kits from behind the Iron Curtain that were okay, but not exactly the sort of raw material that I'm going to use to create a masterpiece.

This was a departure from those; I don't think it's unfair to say that I put a lot more effort into these than I did those archaic kits that ended up being little more than testbeds for this project. There were some frustrations on the way (see: everything about the front cowling on this kit) and a lot of figuring things out as I go (ugh, photo-etch). However, it was an enjoyable experience, even if the kit itself didn't just fall together..

I think the other interesting thing about this build was that the finished product ended up with a very distinctive style, with the heavy use of shading and highlights to represent light and shadow. Some may see this style as a little cartoonish, but I think it really pops, especially when you're looking at it from at least a couple feet away.

My goal was to finish this up for the IPMS Ottawa's annual theme contest. I had a year from when the theme was decided to the contest deadline and, after all the false starts, I finished it with a little under a month to spare. And, as a bonus, I managed to squeak out a win with a split decision. While I'm going to get back to my usual subjects of figures, busts and magic robots, I really like having this little homage to the Republican cause in my display case, and this build was a good experience.

Except for the photo-etch. I still hate that stuff.

About the Author

Brian Latour is a federal civil servant originally from Winnipeg who now lives and works in Ottawa. He built model airplanes in his childhood and teenage years, and briefly built 1:1 scale airliners for a living in the mid-2010's. He discovered figure painting in 2015; Brian mainly paints fantasy figures and busts in scales from 25 mm to 1:8, but been expanding into aircraft and Gundam modelling as of late. Brian also writes hobby and gaming content at iceaxeminiatures.wordpress.com/

Page 40

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